



## COUNCIL MINUTES

February 5, 2009

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on February 5, 2009 at 7:32 a.m.

### COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith  
Alex Finter  
Dina Higgins  
Kyle Jones  
Dennis Kavanaugh  
Dave Richins  
Scott Somers

### COUNCIL ABSENT

None

### OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady  
Debbie Spinner  
Linda Crocker

#### 1. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on Municipal Security services.

Assistant Police Chief Mike Dvorak introduced Police Fiscal Analyst Lisa Quedens and Police Commander Bill Peters, who were prepared to address the Council relative to this agenda item. Chief Dvorak stated that as a result of the Council's recent budget discussions, staff has researched the concept of privatizing municipal security as an alternative business model for the City of Mesa.

Commander Peters displayed a PowerPoint presentation (A copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) and reported that in 1999, the Municipal Security Unit was established to provide security to the Mesa Municipal Court, the City Plaza building and initiate the City's card access system and employee electronic badging process. He explained that subsequent to the events of 9/11, the Municipal Security Unit enhanced its alarm and closed circuit television monitoring of City facilities, increased security at key municipal buildings and implemented security measures at the Mesa Arts Center (MAC). Commander Peters added that Municipal Security personnel act as a liaison with the public and City employees, respond to the public's inquiries concerning City services and serve as ambassadors for the City.

Commander Peters advised that staff met with representatives from Scottsdale and Tempe, both of whom contract with private security vendors. He said that the criteria considered by staff with regard to outsourcing municipal security services included the company's experience with municipal security issues, qualifications, customer service, responsiveness to City staff, professional appearance, flexible staffing and financial impact.

Commander Peters further indicated that although the Municipal Security Unit has a budgeted uniform staff of 42 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs), there are currently 32 FTEs. He explained that

staff conducted a site analysis to identify which City facilities would or would not be appropriate for outsourcing and stated that the Communication Center, the City Plaza building and the Municipal Court were selected as critical, secured facilities. Commander Peters also noted that the facilities identified as less critical, but equally important, included the MAC, the East Mesa Service Center, the Municipal Building, the Arizona Museum of Natural History and the Main Library.

Commander Peters highlighted staff's recommendations as follows:

- Eliminate the 10 vacant Municipal Security positions.
- Retain 16 City Municipal Security staff members at critical, secured sites.
- Outsource 16 positions to non-critical assignments.

Commander Peters commented that the proposed recommendations could be implemented by April of this year utilizing existing contracts in Tempe and Scottsdale. He also explained that the partial privatization of municipal security services would offer an equivalent level of service, a cost that is based on hours rather than units of FTEs, a greater level of deployment flexibility, and an onsite project manager (provided by the contract vendor).

In response to a question from Mayor Smith, Commander Peters clarified that the Municipal Security staff generally works four 10-hour shifts. He stated that with regard to the MAC, if a special event is not scheduled, the facility does not require a large number of security staff. Commander Peters added, however, that additional staffing is often required for special events, at which time staff is paid overtime or off-duty rates for their services.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that by eliminating vacant positions and using a blend of City and private contract employees, the City would experience an annual cost savings of approximately \$760,000; that the pay rate for Municipal Security staff is approximately \$25 per hour (including benefits and overhead) as compared to an estimated \$15.63 per hour for private contract employees.

Councilmember Kavanaugh requested that staff obtain the following information: 1.) The names of the private contractors that are being utilized by Tempe and Scottsdale; 2.) The names of the shareholders/owners; 3.) If any former Mesa employees are involved in the company's ownership that could create a conflict of interest; 4.) The turnover rate and the pay rate for the private contract employees; and 5.) If the private contract employees are required to pay for their own benefits (i.e., health insurance, short-term disability).

Commander Peters responded that Scottsdale has contracted with Akal Security and Tempe utilizes Wackenhut Corporation and T.E.A.M. Security. Ms. Quedens added that the pay rate for Scottsdale's contract is \$11.50 per hour and Tempe's two contracts are approximately \$11.00 per hour.

Chief Dvorak stated that staff merely reviewed various options to present to the Council regarding the partial privatization of municipal security and acknowledged that additional research would be warranted.

Councilmember Kavanaugh commented that in his experience, the turnover rate at private security companies is incredibly high and said that it is an important issue that must be addressed.

In response to a question from Councilmember Higgins, Commander Peters clarified that in order for the Municipal Security Unit to maintain its current level of service, it would be difficult for those individuals to assume additional responsibilities such as parking enforcement. He explained that due to the current level of staffing, if a staff member takes vacation or calls in sick, a post often goes unmanned.

Mayor Smith expressed support for staff's efforts to address the City's critical security needs. He concurred that it is more appropriate for the Municipal Security Unit to provide security at City Hall and the Municipal Court as opposed to private contract employees. Mayor Smith added that he would also favor an option to address temporary security needs at City facilities.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the process by which staff arrived at the estimated \$760,000 in cost savings.

Councilmember Kavanaugh stated that he was a Councilmember when the Municipal Security Unit was established and also after the events of 9/11 when security measures at the City were enhanced. He explained that the Council considered the pros and cons of outsourcing security services and concluded that it was more appropriate to have the public's safety and the City's valuable facilities/assets protected by City employees.

Councilmember Kavanaugh expressed a series of reservations regarding staff's proposal and stated that although there may be short-term savings for the City by using private security vendors, it could result in long-term liability potential. He stated that there could be risks to the public and City employees who use the various facilities and the assets themselves if the security services are not performed in an effective manner. Councilmember Kavanaugh added that the private contractors are not City employees and said that if they are hurt on the job, there is a risk to the City even if those individuals are covered by workers' compensation insurance.

Councilmember Kavanaugh further commented that if the Council moves forward with staff's proposal, he would urge great caution and suggested that the program be scrutinized carefully in terms of the company that is selected and its employees. He also voiced opposition to the MAC being excluded as a critical, secured facility and said he would hope that the Council would reconsider the matter.

In response to a question from Councilmember Higgins, Commander Peters explained that staff has not considered utilizing Municipal Security personnel on a part-time basis, although they could research the matter and bring back their findings to the Council at a future date.

In response to a series of questions from Vice Mayor Jones, City Manager Christopher Brady clarified that the basis for the \$760,000 cost savings would be the elimination of 26 Municipal Security FTEs (10 vacant positions and 16 currently filled positions); that 16 FTEs would remain and 16 positions would be outsourced. He acknowledged the concerns expressed by the Council regarding this matter and said he shared similar concerns.

Mr. Brady suggested that as an alternative proposal, perhaps staff could take the equivalency of the cost of the 10 vacant positions and use private contract employees who would be assigned to the East Mesa Service Center, the Municipal Building, the Arizona Museum of Natural History and the Main Library. He said that if this process continued through the end of the next fiscal year, the City could realize a savings of approximately \$250,000. Mr. Brady added that Mesa's Municipal Security staff would provide security service at the MAC, the Communication Center, the City Plaza building and the Municipal Court.

Further discussion ensued relative to the training process that the contract employees would be required to undertake.

Councilmember Richins questioned why Mesa taxpayers are paying Municipal Security personnel \$25 an hour to do the same job that private sector security companies have determined is worth a pay rate of \$11 an hour. He said that he would not be opposed to private contract employees providing municipal security services to the City of Mesa.

Councilmember Finter concurred with Councilmember Richins' comments.

In response to a question from Councilmember Finter, Commander Peters clarified that with the recent downturn in the economy, the current turnover rate for Municipal Security employees is minimal. He noted, however, that in a better economic climate, the Police Department is continually in the process of hiring Municipal Security personnel.

Responding to a question from Mayor Smith, Chief Dvorak acknowledged that staff is cautious with regard to the level of customer service they expect to receive from a private vendor and said that the Police Department's management and oversight of the contract would be the key components in the success of the program.

Mayor Smith stated that if Mesa contracts with private vendors to provide municipal security services, he would prefer that the City not "trade down" in order to save money and relinquish a higher level of security. He noted that there did not appear to be Council concurrence that staff's proposal move forward and expressed support for the alternative option suggested by Mr. Brady. Mayor Smith also requested that staff provide the Council greater clarification regarding the manner in which the \$760,000 in cost savings was derived.

Mr. Brady confirmed that per the Council's direction, staff would proceed to take the equivalency of the cost of the 10 Municipal Security vacancies and privatize municipal security services at the East Mesa Service Center, the Municipal Building, the Arizona Museum of Natural History and the Main Library. He added that in approximately six to nine months, staff would update the Council regarding the status of the program.

Councilmember Somers voiced support for Mr. Brady's proposal, but requested that the Municipal Security Unit review their functions to determine if the services they provide could be adapted in some manner in order to achieve a level of cost recovery.

Mayor Smith thanked staff for the presentation.

2. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on the Speed Hump Policy as recommended by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Transportation Department Director Dan Cleavenger introduced Senior Transportation Engineer Derrick Bailey, who was present to assist with the presentation. He displayed a PowerPoint presentation (A copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) and reported that 11 years ago, the Council adopted a Speed Hump Policy, which allowed that speed humps could only be installed on streets that are not designated as fire routes. He stated that in today's presentation, he would provide an additional option to the Policy, which is to install speed cushions on streets that are designated as fire routes.

Mr. Cleavenger reported that the most effective neighborhood traffic calming tools include selective Police enforcement and asphalt speed humps. He explained that Transportation staff has worked closely with the Fire Department regarding the Speed Hump Policy and stated that the Fire Department established a network of streets for fire routes that are ineligible for speed humps. Mr. Cleavenger advised that as a result of the complaints received from Mesa residents regarding the emergency vehicles speeding on fire routes, staff proposes to include speed cushions on those streets. He noted that speed cushions, which are similar to speed humps, allow space for the wheels of the fire truck to pass through unobstructed without having to navigate over the hump.

Mr. Cleavenger indicated that staff tested rubber speed cushions on Pepper Place (as a demonstration project) and one collector street, Hermosa Vista Drive. He highlighted the results of the testing, which began in December 2007, on Hermosa Vista and reported that the rubber speed cushions, which cost \$6,200 per set, were successful in reducing speeds from 41 to 31 miles per hour; that the residents on Hermosa Vista liked the results; that the City received many complaints from the surrounding neighborhood regarding the abruptness of the speed cushions; and that the speed cushions were removed in February 2008.

Mr. Cleavenger explained that in July 2008, staff installed asphalt speed cushions, at a cost of \$3,900 per set, on Hermosa Vista Drive. He stated that the speeds were reduced from 41 to 33 miles per hour and noted that the asphalt speed cushions were perceived as more reasonable by residents on the surrounding streets.

Mr. Cleavenger reviewed staff's recommendations as follows:

- Change the Speed Hump Policy to include speed cushions on fire routes. (Asphalt is staff's preference.)
- Include a neighborhood meeting so that property owners not directly affected have the opportunity to comment.
- Present the results of the neighborhood survey and meeting to the Transportation Advisory Board for final approval.

Mr. Cleavenger further commented that the current speed hump budget is \$150,000, of which approximately \$21,000 has been spent. He explained that the introduction of speed cushions would likely mean using the entire \$150,000 budget until the system is saturated. Mr. Cleavenger added there would be more requests for speed cushions than available funding and said that it would be necessary for staff to prioritize and rank those requests. He noted that the ranking process typically occurs in March and suggested that it might be appropriate for staff to

conduct the evaluation twice a year, which would make the speed cushions available to Mesa neighborhoods on a timelier basis.

Discussion ensued relative to the process by which neighborhoods can request speed cushions.

Councilmember Somers expressed support for moving this process forward.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Somers, Mr. Cleavenger clarified that staff did not actively solicit the input of the City's ambulance provider regarding their proposal, but would be happy to do so.

Councilmember Kavanaugh commented that staff's proposal is in response to the needs of Mesa neighborhoods and the Fire Department and is "a logical progression" of the City's Speed Hump Policy.

Mayor Smith commented that there was Council concurrence that staff move forward with their recommendations.

Mayor Smith thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

a. Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meeting held on January 15, 2009

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Vice Mayor Jones, that receipt of the above-referenced minutes be acknowledged.

Carried unanimously.

4. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

Councilmember Richins:	Arizona League of Cities and Towns' "Smart Growth" Scorecard Presentation
Mayor Smith:	Mesa Arts Foundation "Art on the Move" Fundraiser Event
Councilmember Kavanaugh:	Mesa Historical Museum's "Cactus League" Exhibit

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Friday, February 6, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Mayor's Breakfast

Monday, February 9, 2009, 4:00 p.m. – Intergovernmental Affairs Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 8, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Joint Meeting with the Dobson Ranch HOA

6. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:49 a.m.

---

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

---

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

---

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

pag